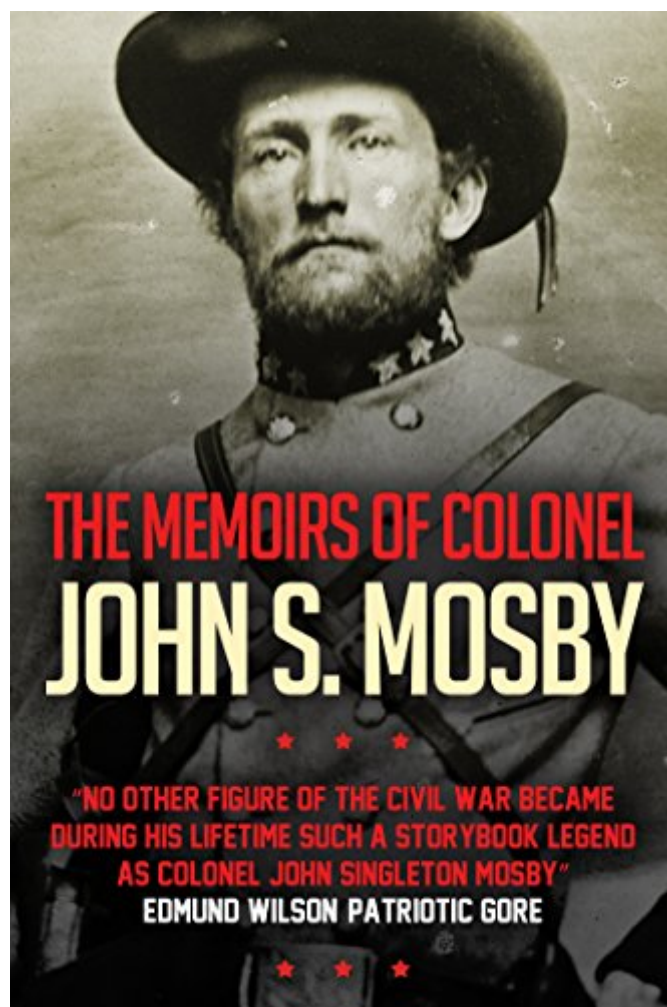


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# The Memoirs Of Colonel John S. Mosby



## Synopsis

John Singleton Mosby, the "Gray Ghost"™, was one of the most effective military leaders of the American Civil War. Leading his cavalry unit, known as Mosby's rangers, he hit the Union Army time and time again with lightning raids. After these raids were done his troops would seemingly melt away, blending in with local farmers and townspeople. In his memoirs, first published in 1917, he gives a thrilling account of his tactics. This book is a fascinating account that covers Mosby's entry into the Confederate army, daily life within it and major battles including Manassas and Gettysburg. "No other figure of the Civil War became during his lifetime such a storybook legend as Colonel John Singleton Mosby, the audacious and resourceful Confederate soldier who, operating in sight of the Capitol dome with a handful of undisciplined guerrillas, performed prodigies in breaking up Union communications and capturing or putting to flight detachments of Union troops that were often far larger than his own."--Edmund Wilson, *Patriotic Gore* "Since the close of the war, I have come to know Colonel Mosby personally, and somewhat intimately. . . . There were probably but few men in the South who could have commanded successfully a separate detachment, in the rear of an opposing army and so near the border of hostilities, as long as he did without losing his entire command."--Ulysses S. Grant

John Singleton Mosby (1833-1916) studied at the University of Virginia and was admitted to the Virginia Bar in 1854. Upon the secession of Virginia he entered the Confederate military service and subsequently formed an independent cavalry unit which operated behind Union lines in a region that came to be known as Mosby's Confederacy. After the war, Mosby held several U.S. Government posts, including a consulship in Hong Kong.

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## Customer Reviews

Since I live in what might be called "Mosby's Back Yard" --- the Washington, DC suburbs of Northern Virginia --- I thought I should learn something about this man for whom several local streets, highways, and bridges are named. A friend recommended "Mosby's Rangers" by Jeffrey Wert; my wife suggested a new book, James Ramage's "Gray Ghost." But I opted to begin my study with Mosby's own account of his adventures: his own memoirs. I know that old soldiers tend to exaggerate their war stories; and they occasionally ramble. But Mosby's Memoirs are still fascinating, and I think the exaggeration is kept to a minimum. The story does get a bit bogged down in Chapter 12 --- talking about events leading up to Gettysburg. The good colonel, like all soldiers, is also somewhat wordy discussing the merits and failures of various generals and officers in the war. Still, all things considered, I found this to be quite interesting. I don't usually read military memoirs, but I enjoyed this. Now on to "Gray Ghost!" Oh, another thing that made this book (and, presumably any book on John Mosby's exploits) fun to read: he mentions so many towns, roads, and places already familiar to me. Last weekend I took a drive to Beaverdam, VA just to see what was left of the train station near where the Yankees captured Mosby early in his career (he was shortly released). Couldn't find the station, but the tracks are still there! If you're familiar with Northern VA & the Shenandoah Valley, check out this book!

John Singleton Mosby ranks up there with the very best of those who served his country during war and I suspect that had he served with the North during the War Between The States his legacy today would be even more enhanced. His Partisan Rangers gave the Federal Army in Virginia more than they had anticipated or could handle and they sustained their brilliant raids throughout the war.

They were so good at their small unit hit and run tactics that at the war's end there was some question as to whether they would be pardoned. They were and his skill as a Ranger, his daring, and his loyalty to his cause and to those who served under him earned him the respect of many of his contemporaries, North and South alike...well, most of them anyway. George Custer probably didn't like him too much but read Mosby's book and see why. Having visited and walked some of the sites of his raids and fights in Virginia I greatly enjoyed having his book with me. Getting back to the place is one thing while getting back to the time is another. MOSBY'S MEMOIRS offered those rare, brief glimpses into the mind and times of a true Special Operations soldier.

Interesting story of the man called the Grey Ghost during the Civil War. Mosby was a lawyer before the Civil War. When the Civil War started, he signed up with Virginia and the Confederate forces. Mosby was a member of the Confederate Cavalry, and early in the war he fought with conventional cavalry units. He was a talented scout, and very good at finding out intelligence information on the actions of the Union troops. Later in the war, he took a small group of men and established what was essentially a guerilla force composed of regular troops, behind the Union lines. He operated in Fairfax County Virginia, and went over to the Shenandoah Valley, to the west and to Alexandria and Arlington to the east. He recruited men for his force, and eventually it became perhaps two to three hundred men. His men were mounted as cavalry, and used captured pistols only, no sabers or carbines, which was unusual for cavalry of the era, or any era. He captured many Union men, as well as guns, horses, mules and cattle. He equipped his own force and sent the excess to Lee who at the time was pinned up outside Richmond and Petersburg by Grant and the Union Army. He was a very effective leader, and kept the union army and the politicians in Washington in a tizzy on a regular basis with his raids. He tied down thousands of Union cavalry and other troops in the Washington area by his actions. After the Civil War, he became a Republican and wanted the country to heal. He supported LtGeneral Grant when he became president as he considered that the right thing to do. Good biography of a very interesting man.

Be ya Reb or Yankee - Mosby was truly an amazing character. A real Robin Hood. One of the original "Special Forces" soldiers. His exploits during the war are absolutely stranger than any fiction one might dream up. Unfortunately, the eBook is resplendent with horrible typos and electronic symbols. In places just getting through a sentence is impossible. Doesn't anybody proof read anymore? Too darn bad! Dat said - I really enjoyed this read!!!

John Singleton Mosby is one of the most famous people from the American Civil War who wasn't a general. Colonel Mosby commanded the 43rd Virginia Cavalry, a partisan ranger group that utilized guerrilla warfare to impede the efforts of Union forces in northern Virginia. Mosby was a lawyer before and after the war, eventually supporting U. S. Grant for president. Mosby's memoirs offer his political opinions, details of some of his exploits, and a very long-winded, overly detailed defense of his friend JEB Stuart's actions right before the battle of Gettysburg. Mosby is sometimes proud and other times humble, but this is certainly a worthwhile read for those with an interest in learning more about the history of the war.

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